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Message Text

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14
ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AGR-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00

FRB-03 H-02 INR-07 INT-05 L-03 LAB-04 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 AID-05 CIEP-01 SS-15 STR-04 TAR-01 TRSE-00

PRS-01 SP-02 OMB-01 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

DOTE-00 FMC-01 CG-00 OFA-01 DLOS-04 /080 W
---------- 121271
O R 220019Z DEC 75
FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7133
INFO AMCONSUL SYDNEY
USDEL MTN GENEVA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE CANBERRA 8477

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EWWT, AS, US
SUBJ: FMC PROCEEDING REGARDING AUSTRALIAN MEAT TRADE

REF: A) STATE 297320; B) SYDNEY 2659

1. CHAIRMAN OF AUSTRALIAN MEAT BOARD (AMB), COLONEL M. MCARTHUR, CONTACTED AG ATTACHE OFFICE FOLLOWING COB FRIDAY, DECEMBER 19, TO PASS ALONG HIS FURTHER COMMENT ON SUBSTANCE REF A. SUMMARY OF ACARTHUR COMMENTS IS AS FOLLOWS:

A. AMB EXTREMELY CONCERNED AT 13.5 PERCENT INCREASE IN FREIGHT RATE FOR CARRIAGE OF MEAT TO EAST COAST U.S. ORGIANLLY PROPOSED TO APPLY FROM NOVEMBER 19, 1975. AMB CONCLUDED THAT AUSTRALIAN LIVESTOCK AND MEAT INDUSTRIES COULD NOT BEAR THIS INCREASE IN CURRENT DEPRESSED CIRCUM-STANCES. BOARD THEREFORE DECIDED TO INVOKE ITS STATUTORY POWERS REGARDING SHIPPING MATTERS AND TO SPECIFY MAXIMUM
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FREIGHT RATES IT WOULD AUTHORIZE FOR CARRIAGE OF MEAT.

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IT TOOK THIS ACTION IN LIGHT OF ITS RESPONSIBILITY AND
AUTHORITY UNDER MEAT INDUSTRY ACT, WHICH REQUIRED BOARD
TO DO ALL THINGS THAT ARE NECESSARY TO ENCOURAGE AND ASSIST
EXPORT OF MEAT FROM AUSTRALIA. ON OCTOBER 17 AMB ADVISED ALL
CONFERENCE MEMBERS THAT IT WOULD RECEIVE OFFERS TO CARRY MEAT
AT RATES NOT EXCEEDING MAXIMA PRESCRIBED BY AMB, I.E., APPROXIMATE
RATES THEN IN EFFECT. ADVICE TO INDIVIDUAL LINES WAS ALSO
FORWARDED TO CONFERENCE SECRETARIAT.

B. NONE OF MEMBER LINES SUBMITTED OFFERS AND CONFERENCE
ADVISED AMB THAT 13.5 PERCENT INCREASE WOULD APPLY FROM
NOVEMBER 19. AMB THEN ON NOVEMBER 10 MADE ADDITIONAL OFFER
AT ESSENTIALLY SAME RATES TO CONTAINER LINE MEMBERS OF CONFERENCE.
IN AMB JUDGEMENT THOSE LINES HAVE CAPACITY AMONG THEM TO
PROVIDE ADEQUATE SERVICE AT RATES PRESCRIBED BY BOARD OF THE
TYPE OF CONTAINERIZED SERVICE WHICH MEAT INDUSTRY PREVIOUSLY HAD
INDICATED TO AMB WAS REQUIRED. EACH OF CONTAINER LINES
ACCEPTED OFFER BY BOARD.

C. IN AMB'S VIEW, MAKING OF THIS OFFER AND ITS ACCEPTANCE BY
CONTAINER LINES CONSTITUTES AGREEMENT WHICH IS BINDING ON BOARD.
ARRANGEMENT ACHIEVES AMB'S PURPOSE OF AVOIDING INCREASE IN
FREIGHT COSTS ON MEAT AND ALSO OFFERS OPPORTUNITY TO RATIONALIZE
TOTAL SERVICE AS WELL AS TO CONTAIN FUTURE COST INCREASES.

D. AMB HAS MADE ITS DECISION KNOWN TO ALL LINES. IT UNDERSTANDS
THERE HAVE BEEN SEVERAL MEETINGS AMONG LINES IN EFFORT TO REACH A
COMMERCIAL RECONCILIATION BUT SO FAR NO SOLUTION ACCEPTABLE TO
ALL PARTIES HAS BEEN FOUND. AT THIS STAGE, THEREFORE, BOARD CAN
HOLD OUT NO HOPE THAT COMMERCIAL SOLUTION SATISFACTORY TO ALL
PARTIES WILL BE FOUND. AMB WISHES TO EMPHASIZE THAT IT HAS TAKEN
ACTION IN ACCORDANCE WITH ITS STATUTORY POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITY
FOR THE WELFARE OF THE AUSTRALIAN LIVESTOCK AND MEAT INDUSTRIES.

2. EMBASSY COMMENT: MCARTHUR ADDED NOTHING TO PREVIOUS AMB
COMMENTS ON THIS ISSUE AND WAS NOT ESPECIALLY RESPONSIVE TO
SPECIFIC POINTS CONTAINED REF A. HOWEVER HE, UNLIKE EXECUTIVE
OFFICER MITCHELL (REF B), MADE NO REFERENCE EITHER TO EFFECT ON
SOUTHBOUND CARGOES OF PRESENT APPARANT STAND-OFF OR TO LIKE-
LIHOOD THAT CASE WILL RECEIVE PRESS COVERAGE IN AUSTRALIA
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UNFAVORABLE TO U.S.

3. ACTION REQUESTED: EMBASSY NONTHELESS REPEATS REQUEST
PARA 4 REF B FOR FURTHER GUIDANCE IN ANSWERING INQUIRIES ON
CASE WHICH SHOULD INCLUDE SPECIFICS AS TO CONSIDERATIONS OF
U.S. INTERESTS ON WHICH FMC POSITION BASED.
PERCIVAL

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Disposition Authority: MorefiRH
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
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Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
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